



NCRN Natural Resource Quarterly

FALL 2011

2011 I&M Bird Monitoring

With a fifth year of NCRN bird monitoring complete, I called ornithologist (and University of Delaware doctoral student) Zach Ladin to ask him how things had gone this year. What were the highlights? And despite being busy with a project on the eating habits of Wood Thrushes, his answer was quick—Red-headed Woodpeckers.



NPS Photo/Nortrup

This summer Zach, along with Liz Tymkiw and James Petersen, as the NCRN Inventory & Monitoring program's bird crew, observed Red-headed Woodpecker adults and even active nests with chicks, in several NCRN parks. This is pretty exciting since the Red-headed

NCRN I&M bird monitoring takes place at approximately 385 forest monitoring plots around the region. Plots are visited twice a year. That's 770 visits a year!

Woodpecker is considered vulnerable at a continental scale by the organization Partners in Flight. The bird crew also noted larger numbers of Cerulean Warblers along the C&O Canal this year than in years past.

While verified data from 2011 has not yet been released, a new set of bird resource briefs is now available—one for each NCRN park. In the briefs you can see by park:

- the ten most common birds (and how common they are relative to each other),
- a map of bird monitoring plots rated for habitat quality, and
- a bird species list that notes species of conservation concern.

These briefs are saved in the shared documents folder of the NCR Natural Resources Sharepoint site at: <http://inpcrosp.nps.doi.net:8094/default.aspx>.

Another highlight from 2011 bird monitoring? Shared field days with seasonal staff from parks including CATO, MONO, and PRWI. Bird crew member Liz Tymkiw said she was glad to share her experience with interested folks who were in many cases totally new to birding.

Questions about I&M bird data? Contact Megan Nortrup by email, or at 202-342-1443 x214.



USFWS Photo

Red-headed Woodpeckers, usually a rare sight in NCRN parks, were more prevalent in 2011 year's monitoring.

Coming to Your Park this Fall...

	Deer Monitoring	Exotic Plant Management	Forest Vegetation Monitoring	Marsh Elevation Monitoring	Veg Map Accuracy Assessments	Water Monitoring
ANTI*						
CATO						
CHOH						
GWMP						
HAFE						
MANA						
MONO						
NACE						
PRWI						
ROCR						
WOTR						

activities scheduled for Sept/Oct/Nov

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*Park acronyms on page four.

Emerald Ash Borer Quarantine Expanded in MD and DC

The quarantined area for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) now includes: the District of Columbia, Baltimore City, and the Maryland counties of Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Garrett, Harford,

Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, and Washington.

Movement of ash trees and hardwood firewood from newly quarantined areas in Maryland and DC is prohibited,

in order to prevent the spread of EAB to other states. EAB, an invasive wood boring beetle, has been responsible for the death and decline of tens of millions of U.S. ash trees. For more information about EAB contact IPM and Invasive Species Coordinator Jil Swearingen by email or at 202-342-1443 x218.

Details on the quarantine are available at <http://www.mda.state.md.us/plants-pests/eab/>.

This poster contrasts Emerald Ash Borer with other insects commonly confused with EAB. Despite the poster's Minnesota origins, many of these insects occur in our area. Copies of this comparison chart are available online at: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/images/M1242-9-1g.jpg>.



A Great Big Gaggle: 2011 Goose Count Results

We definitely ran out of fingers counting the resident Canada geese in Anacostia Park this year. The average number of geese for the entire park this year was 606. That's a lot of bellies to feed. And then compare 606 to the acceptable number of geese for the park of 54 that NCR Wildlife Biologist Scott Bates calculated based on wetland and grassland carrying capacities.

This year was the third year of goose surveying in Anacostia Park, a unit of National Capital Parks – East (NACE). As expected, the section of the park which includes Langston Golf Course had the highest number of geese for the third year in a row (427). Also, the section which includes Heritage Island and the area adjacent to RFK Stadium showed an increase from the previous two years.

The survey tracked the number of both goslings and adults. Goslings averaged 44 per day and gosling numbers were included in the total goose numbers and averages.

Goose count data is an important part of the Anacostia Park Wetland Management Plan that is open for public comment and review until September 26, 2011

at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=18040>.

Thank you to all who participated. To volunteer for next year's count (June 25-28) or for more information, please contact Mikaila Milton by email or at 202-690-5167.

Additional information related to resident Canada geese in the NCR can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/chesapeakebay/cgoose.html>.



A 2006 view of Anacostia Park looking across the Anacostia River toward Langston Golf Course. Marsh restoration efforts can be seen in center.

Guidance on Animal Research in Parks

New guidelines are now in place for all in-park research, teaching, or exhibition projects that involve invasive procedures that harm or materially alter the behavior of free-living vertebrate wild animals in their natural habitat. This includes activities such as trapping, tagging, toe-clipping, electroshocking, and radiocollaring. These guidelines come from National Park Service (NPS) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and were created to help parks comply with the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and other regulations. The National Capital Region's liaison to the NPS IACUC is regional Wildlife Biologist Scott Bates.

All proposals must go through direct, official NPS IACUC review (subcategory A3), or give documented approval from an outside IACUC to the NPS IACUC (subcategory A2). Most projects sponsored by a university or other research institution will fall into the latter category.

New Animal Welfare Act (AWA) guidelines DO NOT affect:

- field (primarily observational) studies that do not harm, materially alter the behavior of, or involve invasive procedures on free-living vertebrate wild animals in their natural habitat.
- field studies and non-scientific actions that involve animals in NPS units that fall outside the jurisdiction and/or intent of the AWA. This includes park actions where animals are handled as part of management activities.
- domesticated animals involved in farm demonstration activities
- injured animal rehabilitation

Questions about park compliance with the AWA can be directed to Scott Bates by email or at 202-342-1443 x226.



NPS Photos

Above: (A&B) Camera traps, like the ones that captured these images at Antietam in 2006, do not fall under the Animal Welfare Act. However ear tagging as seen on this deer (B) requires approval from the NPS Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

Mile-A-Minute Biocontrol Maps

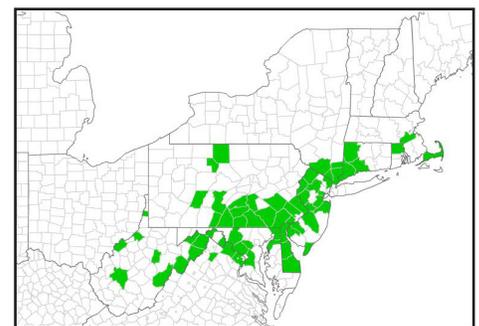
Locations where the mile-a-minute biocontrol weevils (*Rhinoncomimus latipes*) have been released, can be viewed at: <http://www.eddmaps.org/distribution/midatlantic.cfm?sub=57151&host=3065>. Clicking on any county that's colored green will take you to more detailed information. Select "Points on Google Maps" to get to the detailed

location for the weevil release.

More information on mile-a-minute is available at <http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/pepe1.htm>.



Left: The mile-a-minute vine.
Right: The online map showing release sites for the mile-a-minute biocontrol weevil.



Lichens Reveal Air Pollutant Levels

A recent study of lichens in NCRN parks provides us with information about the condition of park air quality.

Lichens get all their necessary nutrients from the air. Rain and dust supply water, minerals, and air particles including pollutants. Because of this, it is possible to measure pollutants absorbed into the bodies of lichens. Also, some sensitive lichens suffer growth problems or die when exposed to certain pollutants, while others are unaffected. As a result, the kind of lichen species present in a spot are an indication of air quality.

So, what did the lichens reveal? That there are no significant pollution hot spots in the NCR, but pollution-tolerant species are the most common.

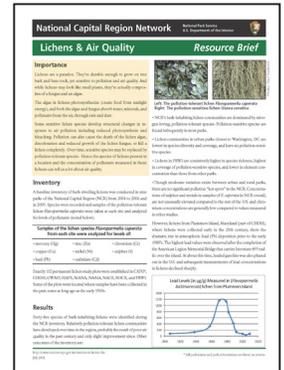
For more details, take a look at the the lichen and air quality resource brief or the full report on NCRN's Net-

work Products page: http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/nocrn/network_products.cfm.

Lichens are an association of an algae and a fungus. They are sensitive to air pollutants including mercury, lead, and sulphur. On Plummers Island in CHOH, one hundred years of lichen data revealed dramatic changes in air lead levels.



NPS Photo/Nortrup



Natural Resource Database Goes Cultural: NR Info Becomes IRMA

NR Info is adding cultural resource documents. As a result, the one-stop online spot to access species lists, reports, geographic information, and other data, will change its name to IRMA (an acronym for Integration of Resource Management Applications).

The shortcut trick of typing “NR Info” into your Internet browser will still take you to the same familiar site, but now, typing in “IRMA” will work as well.

The change is scheduled for early September 2011.

NCRN Nature in the News

Battlefields showcase natural as well as military history. Chesapeake Bay Journal. July/August 2011. <http://www.bayjournal.com/article.cfm?article=4158>

NCR book “A Photographer’s Path” is named a notable government document of the year. Library Journal May 2011. http://www.libraryjournal.com/lj/home/890105-264/notable_government_documents_2011_.html.csp

Civil War 150 in Arlington: The Toll on the Trees. ARLNow.com. August 8, 2011. <http://www.arlnow.com/2011/08/08/civil-war-150-in-arlington-the-toll-on-the-trees/>

Cunningham Falls works to replenish dying tree species [Hemlocks]. Maryland Gazette. July 26, 2011. <http://www.gazette.net/article/20110726/NEWS/707269935/1018/cunningham-falls-works-to-replenish-dying-tree-species&template=gazette>

Potomac Heritage Trail in Woodbridge gets boost. InsideNOVA.com. July 19, 2011. <http://www2.insidenova.com/news/2011/jul/19/potomac-heritage-trail-woodbridge-gets-boost-ar-1182918/?referer=None&shorturl=http%3A%2F%2Fbit.ly%2Fq7Sqs8>

Park Acronyms

- ANTI = Antietam National Battlefield
- CATO = Catoctin Mountain Park
- CHOH = Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park
- GWMP = George Washington Memorial Parkway
- HAFE = Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
- MANA = Manassas National Battlefield Park
- MONO = Monocacy National Battlefield
- NACE = National Capital Parks - East
- NAMA = National Mall and Memorial Parks
- PRWI = Prince William Forest Park
- ROCR = Rock Creek Park
- WOTR = Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts

View I&M NPScape Data Without GIS Software

Have you been curious about the NPScape program but didn't know where to start? Were you worried that you didn't have the computing power or the required GIS software to explore this treasure trove of data? Now you can use a new online map viewer that allows users (including non-GIS specialists) to explore some of the landscape-level NPScape data relating to population, housing, roads, land cover, landscape pattern, and conservation status.

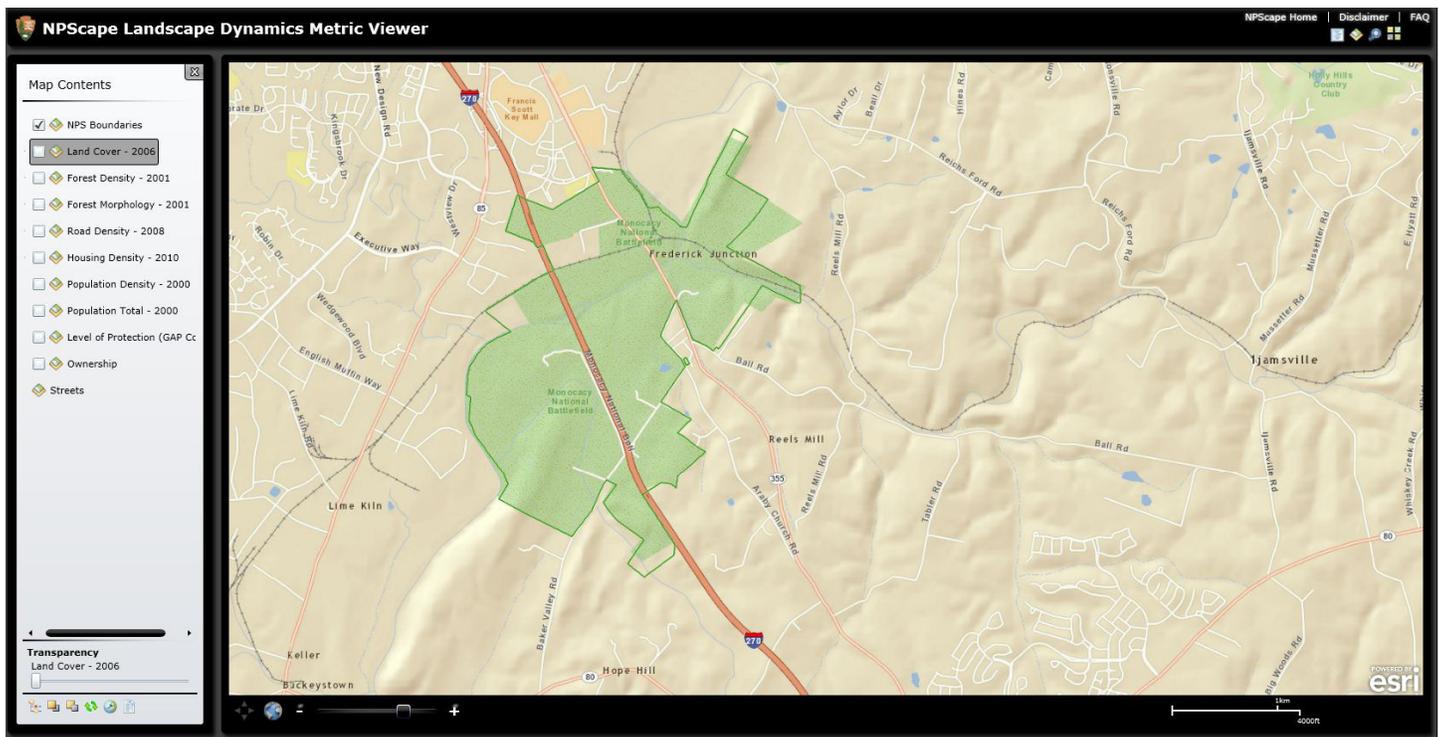
For instance, you can use the viewer to look at land ownership and protected land status or to see data from the 2010 U.S. Census like population levels and housing density. You can also look at forest density and forest morphology data that comes from a broad partnership of federal agencies. Copies of the maps can be saved as images or PDFs. Additional data will be added to the viewer over the next

several months.

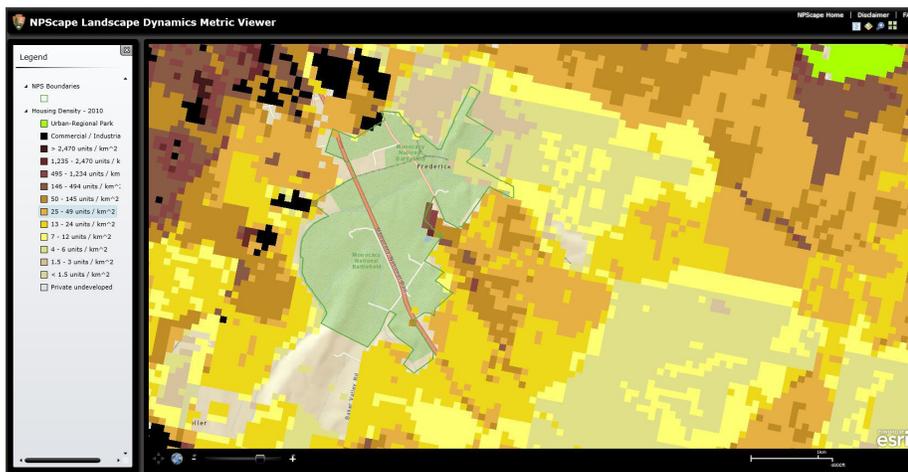
NPS geographic data was once limited to those with the right software, a powerful computer, and plenty of time for downloading. The new NPS Map Viewer runs using a free Microsoft program called Silverlight that is likely already on your computer. If you're not sure, go to the Map Viewer site below. If you don't have it, the viewer will let you know and you an administrator will have to download Silverlight to your machine.

The NPScape Map Viewer URL is: <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/monitor/npscape/viewer/> and an overview of the NPScape program is available at: <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/monitor/npscape/>.

Questions? Contact I&M GIS Specialist Mark Lehman by email or at 202-342-1443 x225.



Above: A look at Monocacy National Battlefield with NPScape Map Viewer (<http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/monitor/npscape/viewer/>)



Left: A view of housing density (from the 2010 Census) near Monocacy National Battlefield using the new Map Viewer.

New Natural Resource Materials

Manassas, Antietam, and Monocacy Natural Resource Condition Assessments (NCRAs) are now complete. Copies are available online at <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/ncrn/nrca.cfm>.



A cannon at Manassas National Battlefield Park.

NPS Photo/Paradis

National Park Service **Guidance on the Restoration of the American Chestnut**. Natural Resource Report NPS/NRSS/BRMD/NRR--2011/409. <https://ninfo.nps.gov/Reference.mvc/Profile?Code=2171772>.

A new, free macrofungus guide to eastern forests called, "Field Guide to Common Macrofungi in Eastern Forest and Their Ecosystem Functions" is available at: <http://nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/38089>.

The recording from an NPS webinar on **White-nose Syndrome** held July 2011 is available online at http://www1.nrintra.nps.gov/brmd/Wildlife_Health_Management/Wildlife_Health/WNS_Webinar.cfm (allow approx. 10 minutes to download).

A video clip of water striders (*Gerridae*) on Henson Creek in NACE's Suitland Parkway: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laHchXqjZa8>.

Detection of 1,000 Cankers Disease

Thousand Cankers Disease, a disease affecting walnut trees (*Juglans* spp.) was detected in Chesterfield County, Virginia in June.

A temporary quarantine is in affect for Virginia's Chesterfield and Henrico Counties and the city of Richmond,

to prevent spread of the disease. Movement of any walnut plants or plant parts out of the quarantined area is prohibited. For more information visit www.vdacs.virginia.gov/plant&pest/disease-tcd.shtml.

Calendar

2011

SEPTEMBER

16-18. Virginia Native Plant Society 2011 Meeting. Manassas, VA. <http://www.vnps.org/>.

OCTOBER

3. Dyke Marsh TV Program will air at 7:30 pm. WHUT channel 32.



Marsh Wren photo: USFWS

20. NAT (Natural Resources Advisory Team) Meeting. CATO.

2012

JANUARY

19. NAT (Natural Resources Advisory Team) Meeting. ROCR.

APRIL

19. NAT (Natural Resources Advisory Team) Meeting. CHOH.

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Sharepoint: <http://imnetsharepoint/NCRN/default.aspx>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/NPSCaptlAreaSci>

NCRN Natural Resource Quarterly offers updates on the status of park natural resources and Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) "vital signs" for the NPS National Capital Region Network (NCRN).

Questions or comments? Contact Megan Nortrup by email or at 202-342-1443 x214.